

Revelation 18

1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

Here we have another angelic announcement. The angel has a very significant message. Notice that he comes with great power, and that the whole earth is illuminated with the light that emanates from the glory that surrounds him.

At the very moment the Antichrist is creating his vast army, God destroys his political headquarters in Babylon (compare Isaiah 13:19; Jeremiah 50:11-27, 40).

Isaiah 13:19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Jeremiah 50:11-27 Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls; Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD. Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land. Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his

bones. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead. In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve. Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the Lord, and do according to all that I have commanded thee. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD. The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left. Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

His declaration announces the destruction of political Babylon – the Antichrist's government and power base (Isaiah 21:9; Jeremiah 51:8).

Isaiah 21:9 And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

Jeremiah 51:8 Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

Religious Babylon was destroyed at the end of the first 3½ years of the Tribulation, now it is the turn of political Babylon at the close of the second 3½ years.

Some commentators believe this to be the destruction of Rome, but, in light of combined prophecy, it is Babylon in Iraq that will be destroyed (Isaiah 13:19-22; 47:7-9; see Jeremiah 50-51).

Isaiah 13:19-22 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

Isaiah 47:7-9 And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am , and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

We can understand that Babylon is full of demons and fallen angels, since they will empower the human soldiers of the Antichrist, gathered at the Euphrates, to attack Israel and Christ on His return.

It has been suggested that the prophecies mentioned above have already been fulfilled, but there is a glaring error in this interpretation. Babylon, a city still in existence in John's day, and has never been destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah; it has never been entirely devoid of human inhabitants, for Jews were living there at the time the Book of Revelation was written. Previous judgements on the city were not accompanied by terrestrial or celestial catastrophes, and it has never been submerged under the Euphrates. Therefore, Babylon must be rebuilt in the future, and, through Satan's power, become a wealthy hub for world (or at least European) financial institutions.

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

By this time every nation will have been influenced by Babylon. We know this is certainly true of Europe's power today, and it will continue through Antichrist's Babylon in the future (see previous chapter). Once fallen, there will hardly be any nation that will not feel the effect of it. So many will be controlled by Babylon that world financial markets will collapse when God deals out His judgement.

The description of political Babylon is almost the same as that of religious Babylon found in Revelation 17:2-4.

Revelation 17:2-4 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

This is because the same evil spirits are in control of both, and once Rome is destroyed, they will move to Iraq where the first empire was established in rebellion against God.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Now is the time to come out from Babylon's influence. This is true for both religious and political Babylon. We cannot unite with the Great Whore, and neither should we become friends of the world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17), "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Whoever unites with Babylon will be judged along with her. Since this verse is dealing with the end of the Tribulation period, it is obvious that many will not have surrendered to the Beast, but instead turned to Christ, so they will need to be both spiritually and physically separated from Babylon. The prophets called for believers to leave Babylon before the judgement fell (Isaiah 48:20; Jeremiah 50:8; 51: 6-9, 45).

Jeremiah 50:8 Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

Jeremiah 51:6-8,45 Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

[45] My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD.

When Babylon is destroyed by God, the Antichrist will be elsewhere, and will be informed of its fall (Jeremiah 50:43; 51:31-32).

Jeremiah 50:43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail.

Jeremiah 51:31-32 One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, And that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.

Those who do separate from Babylon before the destruction comes will rush to Jerusalem to announce the good news (Jeremiah 51:10, 45, 50).

Jeremiah 51:10,45,50 The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God. [45] My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD. [50] Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

The wickedness of Babylon has reached its highest level and cannot be ignored, so God must act against her. God remembers all of her sins. This includes everything from Nimrod's Babel to Antichrist's Babylon, both religious and secular.

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

She will deserve the highest level of God's wrath. It will be thorough, this is what is meant by "double". Babylon will receive her just judgement for all the wickedness it has been guilty of.

7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

This has been true of all world empires. They think that they will continue forever. The Antichrist's empire will be no different. Hitler thought of a thousand year Reich, but the Beast will be aiming for an eternal Reich. Antichrist is the "king" and Babylon his "queen". This is what he will expend all his energy on – the glorification of his kingdom!

This description of Babylon is remarkably similar to that of Laodicea (Revelation 3:17).

Revelation 3:17 **Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.**

Both enjoyed the luxury and glory of the world and both were proud and thought themselves superior. Though Laodicea had the opportunity to repent, Babylon cannot. It has reached the point of no return, especially since its inhabitants do not see any reason to repent or suffer any kind of judgement (Isaiah 47:1, 7-8).

Isaiah 47:1,7-8 **Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. [7-8] And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures,**

that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am , and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

Babylon's judgement will come suddenly, and it will be completed in a single day, therefore those who separate from her must indeed make haste. Political, economic and environmental disaster will send Antichrist's empire into a tailspin to destruction. His headquarters will be burned to the ground in an instant. He thought he could get away with defying and ridiculing God! Babylon thought of itself as mighty, but God is Almighty!

9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.

Leaders of all nations will look on in amazement as they watch the Antichrist System being reduced to ashes. This could only be true in the age of the television. Because the economy of the Beast kingdom will be located in Babylon, once it falls, their respective nations will financially collapse too. Because they ceded power to him, their own authority will crumble also.

The "smoke" here should not lead us to think that Babylon will be destroyed by human means, such as nuclear weapons. God was and still is very capable of destroying cities and nations without the aid of modern weaponry.

10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

There will be great weeping, not just for her but also for themselves. Remember, all the nations involved in the Beast's

kingdom will have invested everything into it, so they are judged along with him. “One hour” suggests the speed in which Babylon will fall. No one will have time to prepare for the consequences of its destruction. “Standing afar off” may allude to their observance of Babylon’s demolition through media broadcasting throughout the world.

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

Never again will Babylon (religious or political) influence the world. Her years of glory are ended in a moment. The financial systems of the world will collapse, leaving governments and business in absolute devastation and ruin.

Revelation 13 revealed that no one will be able to buy and sell without the Mark of the Beast, but now the very system that implemented the Mark is unable to buy and sell any more.

12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

This verse is symbolic of the vast wealth and treasures of Babylon. It reveals just how economically powerful she will be in the last days. Again, this is especially true today in Europe as it gears up for the Antichrist’s takeover and incorporation into his own European empire.

It seems that Antichrist’s version of a global commercial state has worked favourably for his empire. He controls metals, gems, clothing, furnishing, and food products (see :13). This probably means that Babylon will be his import and export centre, so once it is destroyed, international turmoil will be the obvious result.

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

This verse carries through with the same idea of the previous. The last statement should be noted. This is what it is all about. Not earth's riches or glory only, but the souls of men. Satan simply wants the souls of men. This is what his war with God has always been about. There is also the added thought of what is termed "modern day slavery" – the absolute control of someone else's life.

14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

The glory of Babylon is over. All she hoped and dreamed for will never happen. Antichrist's eternal kingdom will be over in seven years (just like Hitler's thousand year Reich).

15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

The world leaders will be stunned, so will weep and wail, that is, they will be mentally and emotionally devastated. We know that Christ's Kingdom is about to appear, but to them it is the end of the world. In a sense they will be right. Finally the world will be free from all Babylonish influences.

16 And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.

This verse has lead some commentators to say that the Antichrist is the pope of Rome and his kingdom will be ruled from the Vatican. But we see from our reading of these last few chapters that there is a political as well as religious Babylon. The Vatican exists until

the Beast takes it over. This is why the destruction of both arms of his kingdom appear very similar.

17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off.

Again, the fall of the financial markets is reiterated. Babylon's fall will affect every living soul on earth to some degree, but especially those involved in commerce. Transportation industries will instantly go into economic ruin.

18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!

The devastating effect of her fall is noted. It is obviously worldwide even though it is unlikely that Antichrist will rule the entire planet. For example Britain is not ruled by China or America, but we feel the pressure when their money markets goes through a tough time.

19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

Can we ignore the extent of God's judgement upon Antichrist and his empire? Several times in this chapter we see how it will affect the world.

20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

Heaven will erupt in joy! All who have ever perished or were persecuted by Babylon throughout the ages will rejoice to see her final day. Do we not rejoice at the fall of evil empires? So too will Heaven (Jeremiah 51:48-49).

Jeremiah 51:48-49 Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD. As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

What happens to a rock thrown into the sea? It sinks. So it will be with Babylon. She will sink to rise no more. Babylon throughout the ages has been an offence to God, thus as the greatest offender of all, she deserves the judgement meted out to her (Matthew 18:6).

Matthew 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee.

Never again will she hear the sound of the raucous and sensual entertainment industry. The noise of the manufacturing industry is stilled. Now a deathly silence exists where there was once noise, music and merriment.

23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

No light will shine in her streets, nor will the sound of joy ever again be heard. This may be a continuation of the fifth bowl (vial)

judgement, if so, Babylon has been in constant darkness (Revelation 16:10).

Revelation 16:10 *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.*

Maybe the only light source has been from candles, oil and torches since that time.

Nobody will ever be influenced by her wickedness again. The fact that the word “sorceries” (*pharmakeia*) is used seems to indicate that Babylon will have its own drug industry (both medical and recreational). If the word simply refers to occult practices, then it might hold the same meaning as Nahum 3:4, “*Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts*”.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Why? Why is Babylon judged so severely by God? Because she has always been the enemy of God. She has sought the souls of men, and those who instead submitted to God, she persecuted and killed. She is responsible for the blood of all who have been slain on the earth. This indicates that God is dealing with Babylon from Nimrod to Antichrist. It has been the same system throughout the ages. In fact her foundation was first laid when Cain, who religiously rebelled against God, slew Abel. It is from him that Nimrod came. So “all that were slain upon the earth” is no exaggeration.

Vengeance belongs to God (Romans 12:19-21).

Romans 12:19-21 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed*

him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

False religion and godless governments have always sought to prohibit and destroy anyone who worships the true God of the Bible.